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AMHERST COLLEGE
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS 01002DD/A Registry
File Liaison

Executive Registry

76-8004

The President

May 17, 1976

413-542-2234

413-542-2000

DD/A Registry

76-2581

Mr. George Bush
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Mr. Bush:

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities, under the Chairmanship of Senator Frank Church, in its report on covert and clandestine relations between the C.I.A. and universities, recommended no action to prohibit such relations. Instead, the Senate Select Committee said it believes "it is the responsibility of private institutions and particularly the American academic community to set the professional and ethical standards of its members."

I accept the responsibility named by the Senate Select Committee, and write you for information which I need in order to discharge it. Under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), I wish to know, as President of Amherst College, whether any intelligence operation conducted by the C.I.A. has involved any faculty member, student, or employee of Amherst College, including, but not limited to, paid or unpaid agents or informers.

I do not wish to have the name of specific individuals. I wish only to know whether and to what extent any individual at Amherst College may have been involved in covert relations with the C.I.A. Frankly, I am incredulous that any individual could possibly have been, but then the report of the Senate Select Committee is surely a challenge to innocent faith in the operations of agencies of the United States government.

I do not wish to lecture faculty, students, or employees of the College, in the abstract, about their professional and ethical obligations. To do so could only arouse general suspicion and free-floating anxiety, wonderment about why I address the question at all. I find myself in the awkward position of not knowing, by definition, whether there is some secret arrangement between the C.I.A. and any member of the College, now or in the past.

Important issues are involved. At Amherst College, we try to teach students to live by a code of "intellectual responsibility." A sentence from that code reads, "Amherst cannot educate those who are unwilling to submit their own work and ideas to critical assessment." The sentence is an attempt to capture in words the ideal of an intellectual community, the belief that openness, honesty, the willingness to say what one has to say and to accept criticism and to listen to opposing views are essential, the necessary conditions of intellectual life. Secrecy subverts those essential values and conditions. It is, to put it simply, intolerable in an academic community.

Mr. George Bush

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May 17, 1976

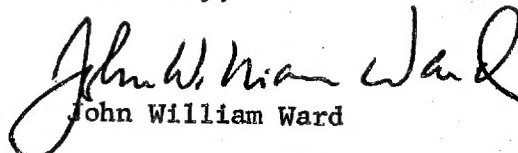
More is involved, no less than the conditions of freedom in a pluralistic and free society. That is not simply rhetoric. Your responsibilities as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency are heavy and grave. The justification of all you do derives finally from the defense of freedom. But in a free society, the surest way to subvert freedom is to call into doubt, to question the authenticity and credibility of free and independent institutions within American society itself.

Between the isolated individual and the awesome power of the state, a free society depends upon intermediate institutions to act as buffers against power, to say "No" to power. To erode the capacity to believe that private institutions do play the role which freedom requires is to create a psychology of mistrust and fear which can only weaken freedom itself.

Your responsibility is great. My responsibility is small. But to discharge my responsibility, namely, to remind members of one academic community of their proper intellectual and moral and political responsibility, requires information from you. It is information legally required, but I would not insist on that. It is morally required.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially,


John William Ward

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cc: William W. Van Alstyne, President, AAUP
George L. Shinn, Chairman, Board of Trustees
Senator Frank Church
Senator Edward Kennedy
Senator Edward Brooke

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS
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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

Telephone 202-466-8050

DD/A Registry

76-2279

President

WILLIAM W. VAN ALSTYNE
Duke University

General Secretary

JOSEPH DUFFEY
Washington Office

May 4, 1976

Mr. George Bush
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

DD/A Registry
Security

Dear Mr. Bush:

The recent report of the Senate Select Committee on Foreign and Military Intelligence has confirmed what was already published elsewhere: that the CIA has for years covertly used academic institutions and employed academic persons in ways which compromise institutional and professional integrity. Universities and scholars have been paid to lie about the sources of their support, to mislead others, to induce betrayed confidences, to misstate the true objects of their interest, and to misrepresent the actual objectives of their work.

In ending the practice of CIA employment of missionaries and journalists for covert operations, you have demonstrated your concern for and your willingness to protect the integrity and independence of those institutions. As national President of the American Association of University Professors, I call upon you now to provide the same guarantees against misuse and subversion for our colleges and universities so that they may be freed of the stigma of covert, and often unknowing, participation in manipulative government operations conducted by the CIA.

The American Association of University Professors espouses the professional freedom of teachers and scholars not as some peculiar entitlement of their own but as a duty that they owe to their students and to the community as a whole. For this reason, the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, issued jointly by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges and endorsed by approximately a hundred learned and professional associations, provides:

"Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

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A government which corrupts its colleges and universities by making political fronts of them has betrayed academic freedom and compromised all who teach. When colleges and universities are made conduits of deceit and when faculty members are paid to lie, there is an end to the common good of higher education.

On behalf of the American Association of University Professors, I write to express my dismay and utter repugnance at the disregard for the integrity of institutions of higher education shown by the CIA. The practice of shamelessly exploiting the reputation of American academics for trustworthiness, which has characterized CIA activity in the past, evidently continues today. I see no reason whatsoever why higher education should not be treated with the same regard previously shown in your action ending the covert use of missionaries and journalists by the CIA. I ask you to take steps to end the exploitation of the academic community and to disengage the Agency from covert activities which induce academics to betray their professional trust.

The American academic community awaits the necessary forthright CIA guarantees that its integrity will not be further compromised.

Sincerely,

William Van Alstyne

William W. Van Alstyne

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